

CERTIFICATE of RECOGNITION

By virtue of the authority vested by the Constitution in the Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia, there is hereby officially recognized:

VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE MONTH

WHEREAS, Virginia agriculture generates approximately 12.3 percent of all sales in the state, contributes approximately \$19.5 billion to the gross state product annually and creates nearly 10 percent of the total jobs statewide; and

WHEREAS, Virginia farms cover 34 percent of the total land area of the Commonwealth, with the average farm size being 181 acres; and

WHEREAS, Virginia agriculture is a diversified industry of both small farms and large agribusiness operations, with such diverse products as livestock, field crops, fruits, vegetables, poultry and dairy; and

WHEREAS, Virginia is home to many non-traditional agribusinesses such as equine, greenhouse and nursery, aquaculture and vineyards; and

WHEREAS, in comparison with other states, eleven Virginia commodities including the tomato, peanut, and snap bean rank in the top ten nationwide in terms of volume produced; and

WHEREAS, the availability of Virginia Grown fruits and vegetables at grocery stores, farmers markets, and roadside stands makes it convenient and fun for Virginians to choose fresh, just-picked produce; and

WHEREAS, in order to encourage Virginians to choose fresh Virginia Grown fruits and vegetables as an essential part of a healthy eating plan, the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services has developed the theme "Pick the Good Stuff";

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mark R. Warner, do hereby recognize May, 2005 as **VIRGINIA AGRICULTURE MONTH** in the **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.